Planning Objection Letter To: Development Management, Kirklees Metropolitan

Borough Council Subject: Objection – Proposed Conversion of Current Nursery at 14B Holly Bank Road, HD3 3JE to 4 Flats From:

Date: 13th November 2025

Points I would like to comment on:

I believe a greater burden of proof is needed in the Planning Statement dated 29.10.2025 as there seems to be some assumptions in the document which do not accurately reflect the situation as it currently stands.

Point 1.4 States that the income from the flat conversion would 'generate additional income to pay for professional tuition and purchase instruments for the children. It is proposed to convert their only asset, 14 B Holly Bank Road, currently used as a day nursery, to residential units, in order to generate a higher rental income'.

My comment around this is that: The social impact trade-off of the brass band initiative in comparison to a community childcare provision is incomparable: the continued early education and child interventions alongside wraparound provision for over 120 children each year versus an unsubstantiated brass instrument initiative, I do not believe holds sufficient weight.

Point 1. 5 states that this has been a success in other parts of the country. Have the members conducted their own local research/ feasibility studies to prove what community benefit this would bring over the current provision in place.

Point 1.6 On the point of accuracy the request of having a gate was requested several years prior to the horrific stabbing incident. It was a request to facilitate some extra play space for the children, supplementary to the recreation ground that we use. The Landlord made it clear at this point that the provision for space for 7 cars to facilitate band practice, in their opinion outweighed the need for a gate which would have reduced this to 6 spaces.

Point.1.7 I would challenge that the grounds put forward of not having suitable outdoor space is not the primary reason for putting forward plans not to renew the lease. This is not the first time notice has been given. Notice was also given in the middle of a lease in the Summer of 2023. It was deemed by a legal professional that the notice was not served correctly, there were no legal grounds for the notice and there were concerns raised about the notice being 'bullying' in nature. The outdoor space is not a barrier to the current service we provide, this condition was satisfied in the Osted inspection which took place in 2021.

Point 1.7 With the assistance of Council departments and on our own efforts we have tried over a number of years to find alternative provision. There is no alternative provision available in this area. Baton House has proved to be in an ideal location; in terms of its proximity to the schools we serve, and the parents that we serve, many of whom have multiple children of different ages. The provision was put in the community following consultation with parents (300 parents responded to the consultation in 2015) who deemed that what they needed was more provision for childcare following the increase in housing.

We provide a 'one stop' provision and there are no available premises in the immediate vicinity that provides this. Our sessions are flexible; parents are not tied into paying for sessions they do not use; our provision spans across 49 weeks, allowing working parents a flexible childcare option. Many of the parents we serve are health professional and during covid we remained open to serve those who worked on the front line to provide care for parents who were Key Workers. Our care offer is unique and has been tailored to the needs of working parents in the area . We have over the past 8 years provided care for close to 500 children (this information can be verified on our booking system). Other local nurseries are limited in their provisions, they do not have provision for under 2's, only take preschoolers and do not offer wrap around provision afterschool care, holiday club provision. With the governments expansion of 30 hours to children 9 months and older, the need for this provision is actually greater now. The comments made in the Planning Statement can only be taken as speculation. The nursery provision and afterschool continues to see year on year growth, and is very much a needed asset in the community.

Supplementary to this, we offer an inclusive service, and having smaller ratios, this has significant benefits for children with Special Education Needs. Recent changes to the Early Years Statutory Framework places more emphasis on the fact that settings need to be inclusive in their offer. We have established a welcoming provision for all children including those with special educational needs and have the resources to continue to provide such provision.

Childcare sufficiency data, (2024/25) for the area, also proves contrary to the point made in point 1.7. There is significant proof that there is a need for such provision in the Lindley area.

We have, following the first notice given by the Landlords engaged with; local councillors, council sufficiency team manager, and Town business officer and unfortunately this quest has been unfruitful. There is no current suitable alternative in the vicinity for the provision to move to.

I would like to mention at this point the very premises on which this community venture started 10 years ago, and on which planning approval for change of use was granted on

the 6th January 2016, was due to the fact that several large-scale housing developments have been completed in the local area, amongst these College Avenue, Blackthorn Drive, Weatherill development, Plover Road and no suitable community provision put in place.

At the time of taking on the building and applying for planning approval for change of use it was deemed that 14B Holly Bank Road would serve the community with childcare provision/ facilities. It has proven its viability and sustainability. The building was unused and in a poor state of repair prior to taking on the building . Personal investment and a Key Fund loan was made to bring the community asset back into existence after the building lay unused for several years. It was the only asset available at that time, and the picture in the area continues to be the same. More recently we have witnessed another new development on Brian Street, a substantial development of residential units consisting of flats/ apartments.

This proposal brings with it further disadvantages in terms of the loss of employment for practitioners who work in the community providing care for the children across all ages 6months – 11years. This proposal would not be in the best interests of the children and the families we serve .

The statement on sufficiency information in point 1. 7 is outdated and recent data published in 2024 identifies Lindley as an area of need.

I believe for all the reasons cited above the application should be refused because it fails to meet Kirklees Local Plan Policy PLP 48 – no evidence of lack of need, non – viability or replacement facility.

Conflicts with Kirklees Local Plan Policy PLP 49 – reduce rather than supports, educational provision.

Contravens National Planning Policy Framwork para. 95 – removes a valued educational/ childcare resource

I would urge the Planning Sub Committee visit the site and consider the full social and educational consequence of loss of this important community facility.

Yours faithfully,